Through the Backward Regions Grant Fund scheme and Gram Swaraj Yojana, the Ministry of Panchayati Raj also provides funds to the states for capacity building of staff and elected representatives of the Panchayats.

Amendment in Panchayati Raj rules

†1922. SHRI PYARELAL KHANDELWAL: Will the Minister of PANCHAYATI RAJ be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government proposes to amend the Panchayati Raj rules;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government is considering to enhance the rights of Panchayati Raj office bearers;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI C.P. JOSHI): (a) to (e) Local Government, *i.e.* Panchayati Raj is a States subject. States covered under Part-IX of the Constitution are empowered to make legislations and rules thereunder regarding Panchayati Raj, and also regarding Panchayati Raj office bearers. Government of India has no direct role in the matter.

Rajiv Gandhi National Drinking Water Mission in Kerala

1923. SHRI A. VIJAYARAGHAVAN: Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that several crores of rupees that are to be reimbursed to the Competent Authority of Kerala for successfully implementing the schemes under Rajiv Gandhi National Drinking Water Mission with 50 per cent Central assistance is pending from the year 2002-03;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether this pending amount will be reimbursed affirmatively;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (MS. AGATHA SANGMA): (a) to (e) No sir. Each State, including Kerala, is allocated funds at the beginning of each financial year from the budgetary provision made for Accelerated Rural Water Supply Programme (ARWSP), now renamed as National Rural Drinking Water Programme (NRDWP) of the Rajiv Gandhi National Drinking Water Mission, Department of Drinking Water Supply. Funds are then released to each State in two instalments during the year. The first instalment is released unconditional, unless the State has not taken its 2nd instalment for the previous year. At the time of release of second instalment, the funds are released after fulfilling certain

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.